THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • FRIDAY • DECEMBER 15, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 50 • LATE CITY EDITION

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GOVT GETS 6 WKS TO FRAME RULES FOR SEIZURE OF DIGITAL DEVICES

SC gives Centre six weeks to frame guidelines for search and seizure of digital devices of accused persons during raids by security personnel

CBI MANUAL TO BE FOLLOWED FOR NOW

The court in its interim order on Thursday directed that all the Central agencies will follow the 2020 CBI Manual for search and seizure of digital devices like mobiles and laptops till the Centre's guidelines are framed. Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia expressed concern over the delay in framing guidelines since 2021. The next hearing is on Feb 6

DISCUSSIONS ON TO FRAME NORMS: GOVT

- The court was hearing two petitions seeking comprehensive guidelines on search and seizure of digital devices by probe agencies
- The govt said several rounds of talks have been held to frame norms for seizure of electronic devices so as to protect individual privacy and freedom, particularly of media professionals, against arbitrary action

300

JOURNALISTS' DEVICES WERE TAKEN IN THE RECENT NEWSCLICK RAID

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Day after, fugitive Lalit Jha nabbed

UAPA invoked against intruders, accomplices; 4 placed under police remand; 8 security personnel suspended

UJWAL JALALI @ New Delhi

A day after intruders made a mockery of Parliament's security cover, fugitive Lalit Jha, said to be the mastermind of the whole drama, was arrested. He surrendered before Kartavya Path Police Station in New Delhi, sources said. He has been handed over to Special Cell of the Delhi Police that is investigating the matter.

Earlier in the day, a case was registered against the two intruders and their accomplices under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Offences punishable under UAPA are non-bailable. A local court placed them under seven-day police remand.

Heads also began to roll as eight personnel attached with Parliament security were suspended for dereliction of duty. The eight belong to difference security agencies and were on Central deputation.

One of the two intruders, Manoranjan D, is said to have done a recce of the old Parliament building during its budget session. He found that footwear wasn't being checked during screening of visitors, hence the ploy to smuggle smoke canisters in shoes. Special shoes were made in Lucknow to sneak in the canisters.

"So far, all the four accused claimed they were self-motivated and they planned and executed the operation on their own," a police officer said.

In the court, the prosecution accused the four of indulging in an act of terrorism and said they tried to incite fear. "It was a well planned attack on Parliament," police said. "They need to be taken to Mumbai, Mysore and Lucknow for probe," the court was told.

The fifth suspect, Vikram alias Vicky Sharma — and his wife Rakhi — were let off for now after questioning.

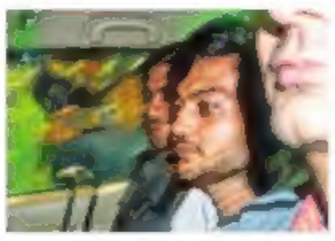
Jha was outside Parliament on Wednesday and was holding the mobile phones of the two intruders — Manoranjan from Mysuru and Sagar Sharma from Lucknow — as also Neelam from Haryana's Hisar and Amol Shinde of Maharashtra's Latur, who staged a simultaneous protest outside Parliament.

"Jha appears to have received directions on Wednesday from another person to flee," said sources privy to the probe.

A West Bengal angle came up after Jha apparently sent a video of the protest outside Parliament to college student Nilaksha Aich, a resident of Halisahar in North 24-Parganas. Aich later posted it on his Instagram account. Jha's Insta account, too, shows that the same footage.

"I was in college. After classes, I checked my WhatsApp messages and found it was sent by Jha whom I met in April this year at an NGO event. I saw him playing an active role at the event and we shared contact numbers," said Aich.

A Special Cell team of the Delhi Police is in Bengal after they learnt that Jha lived and studied in Kolkata and rented at room in Central Kolkata where he used to run coaching classes for children.



From top: Neelam, Sagar Sharma and Amol Shinde after they were produced before the Patiala House Court | PTI/PRAVEEN NEGI

PROBE TEAM VISITS MANORANJAN'S HOUSE

A team of officers from Central Intelligence and Internal Security visited Parliament security breach case accused Manoranjan's house in Mysuru on Thursday. The team spoke with Manoranjan's parents and searched his room, and also examined his social media accounts | P4

Suspended TMC MP Derek O'Brien and others outside the Parliament House | PTI

14 OPPN MPs SUSPENDED FOR 'UNRULY CONDUCT'

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

Mistaken identity

Hours after suspending DMK's Member of Parliament S R Parthiban, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla revoked the suspension after the government clarified that that it was a case of mistaken identity as the member was not present in the House when others disrupted the proceedings

A day after the security breach in Parliament, as many as 13 MPs were suspended from the Lok Sabha and one from the Rajya Sabha for the remainder of the Winter Session for 'unruly conduct' and allegedly disrupting proceedings.

As the Opposition upped the ante on suspensions, the government faced some awkward moments after DMK's S R Parthiban's name was wrongly included in the original suspension list of 14 MPs from the Lok Sabha. Later, his suspension was revoked after DMK members pointed out he was not present in the House.

Slamming the government, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh questioned why no action was taken against Pratap Simha, the BJP MP who issued passes to the intruders.

"What happened yesterday in the Lok Sabha was deeply worrying. What happened today in the Lok Sabha is totally bizarre," Ramesh said.

Of the suspended MPs from LS, nine are from the Congress (T N Prathapan, Hibi Eden, Jothimani, Ramya Haridas, Dean Kuriakose, V K Sreekandan, Benny Behanan, Mohammad Jawed, and Manickam Tagore); two are from CPM (P R Natarajan and S Venkatesan); one from CPI (K Subbarayan); and one DMK — Kanimozhi. TMC's Derek O'Brien was suspended from the Rajya Sabha.

NOT AGAIN...

5-month-old female foetus found in waste bin, B'luru hosp sealed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AFTER police busted the Mandya-Mysuru-Bengaluru female foeticide racket, intensified inspection unfolded another incident wherein a five-month-old female foetus was found in a waste bin of a private hospital at Hoskote on Wednesday.

Officials of the Health Department sealed the SPG Hospital. The police took a few employees, including three nurses, into custody. The main accused, a doctor, is absconding and efforts are being made to nab him. A lab technician has also been booked. The police are checking hospital records to ascertain the number of illegal abortions that have been performed and are going through CCTV footage.

Vivek Dorai, Deputy Director, PCPNDT (Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostics Techniques Act), said the officials found an unregistered portable ultrasound machine on the hospital premises during a routine inspection on December 5. Once the matter was brought to the notice of higher officials, another inspection was conducted on Wednesday. "When we visited the hospital, nurses and other employees there did not give proper replies to our questions. Suspecting their behaviour, we decided to inspect the hospital premises. We found the foetus in the waste bin at an operation theatre. We immediately sealed the hospital and alerted the police," Dorai said.

Further investigation by the officials revealed that the hospital maintained no records for the number of ultrasound performed. It also had no prenatal records of patients. Health Commissioner D Randeep said, "This is the first case booked for female foeticide through illegal abortion in Karnataka with evidence (unregistered ultrasound machine and foetus in the waste bin)." Prior to this, factors such as no proper registration of scanning centres, maintenance of ultrasound records, foetuses found abandoned or unregistered ultrasound machines hinted at such illegal activities in the State, he added.

The accused have been booked under the Prohibition of Sex Selection Act 1994, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971, voluntarily causing a woman with child to miscarry (IPC 312), intent to cause miscarriage of a woman with a child and results in the death of that woman (IPC 314) and other Sections.

HC allows survey of Mathura Shahi Idgah

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

IN a major move in Mathura's Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah dispute, the Allahabad High Court on Thursday allowed the setting up of a court-monitored panel to survey the mosque.

"So far as the modalities and composition of the commission is concerned, this court feels it proper to hear the counsel for the parties for such purposes on the next date fixed i.e. December 18," said Justice Mayank Kumar Jain in response to an application filed on behalf of deity Bhagwan Shri Krishna Virajman and seven other Hindu plaintiffs.

The court said the survey could be supervised by a three-member commission of advocates, adding that the commission's report will not affect the merits of the case. It said the sanctity of the religious place must be strictly maintained during the survey and that no harm or injury should be caused to the structure in any manner.

"The commission is duty-bound to submit its fair and impartial report on the basis of the actual status of the property. The commission may also submit its discovery as to the existence of particular signs at the property as referred by the plaintiffs," the court said.

The single-bench also rejected the plea of the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board that its application challenging the maintainability of suit for survey must be heard first. The court said there is no provision to give priority to one application over the other.

CHERRY ON THE CAKE

A participant gives finishing touches to a cake depicting the Chandrayaan-3 mission, at the Annual Cake Show on St Joseph's Indian High School Ground in Bengaluru on Thursday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

EXPRESS READ

Narayana Murthy flags fake news about him

New Delhi: Infosys co-founder NR Narayana Murthy on Thursday called out "fake news items", which claimed he endorsed automated trading applications and warned people not to fall for such claims. He also slammed the use of his deepfake pictures.

WITH THIS ISSUE
CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE
50 PAGES, INCLUDING 32 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

B'gavi incident: An extraordinary case, will be handled extraordinarily, says HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

OBSERVING that the Belagavi incident, where a woman was stripped, beaten up and tied to an electric pole, is more heinous than the plight of Draupadi whose saree was pulled by Dushyasana in the Mahabharata, the High Court of Karnataka on Thursday said that it is not satisfied with the action taken by the State.

The court also orally observed that the incident reflects deep-rooted male chauvinism and only because they (the accused) are male, they behaved brutally with the woman and being male does not give them a licence to behave inhumanly. The court noted that it is an extraordinary incident and it will be handled extraordinarily.

A division bench of Chief Justice Prasanna B Varale and Justice Krishna S Dixit made these scathing remarks after going through the status report submitted by Advocate General (AG) Shashikiran Shetty.

"The status report is falling too short to refer to certain areas at this stage. Least we can say that we are not satisfied by the way things took place post the incident," the court said while hearing a suo motu petition.

The report stated that the house of the victim belonging to a downtrodden community was attacked by the accused from the same community around 1 am on December 11. After ransacking her house, they attacked her with logs before stripping and parading her naked. They all kicked her and tied her to an electric pole and thrashed her till 3 am. Eight accused are yet to be arrested.

The status report is falling too short to refer to certain areas at this stage. Least we can say that we are not satisfied by the way things took place post the incident

Karnataka High Court

To this, the court said what would other women feel? If sensible women read this, they will start hating this country. It is much more heinous than the plight of Draupadi. Fortunately, Lord Krishna helped her. But unfortunately, no one came to help this victim from the Dushyashanas and Duryodhanas. The boy and girl might have made a mistake. Why should the mother be punished? Is it her fault to give birth to her son?, the court questioned.

The court also wondered whether the State Women's Rights Commission exists here? The State Human Rights Commission and the Women's Rights Commission must have taken action immediately.

The court directed the AG to submit an additional status report on December 18 and ordered the Belagavi Police Commissioner and the ACP, who is the investigating officer, to appear before it on the said date.

Kurla Exp skips B'luru, pax in lurch

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

OVER 700 passengers proceeding to Bengaluru on board Lokmanya Tilak Kurla Express from Mumbai had a nightmarish travel experience on Monday (December 9).

They had no clue that their train would bypass Bengaluru on its way to Coimbatore by taking a different route. Many senior citizens ended up spending up to Rs 8,000 on cabs from Guntakal Junction in Andhra Pradesh to Bengaluru.

The Bengaluru Railway Division announced a partial cancellation of the train on December 1. The Guntakal Division too had put out an advisory. However, the ticket confirmation messages sent to the passengers confirmed their journey up to SBC Bengaluru City.

"I got this message at 6.43pm on December 8 stating that train No 11013 does not touch your station SBC on 8.12.2023. My train is supposed to reach KSR Bengaluru only on December 9. So, I assumed this was for the train that left the previous day which would reach Bengaluru on December 8 and did not pay much attention to it. Unfortunately, as it turned out the next day, it was for our train and the date in the message was wrong," DH Suresh, a senior citizen, who travelled with his family, told *TNIE*. P5

STATE CRAFT

Channapatna toys now a part of academic activities in Afghanistan

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

TOYS made in Channapatna near here have now become part of children's academic activities in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of External Affairs sent some toys to Afghanistan some time ago as a friendly gesture. This traditional craft of Karnataka has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

The famed wooden toys are made by artisans in and around Channapatna town of Ramanagara district, which is around 60 km from Bengaluru. There are over 250 cottage units and around 50 factories that make toys in Channapatna.

According to a post shared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Afghanistan, hundreds of children in that country have been affected by drug abuse.

"We are striving to get them support, and through the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, toys donated by the Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Mission have reached many children in Afghanistan," it stated.

Mission director Sreevidya PI told *The New Indian Express* that over 500 toys made of ivory and wood were sent to children in Afghanistan some time ago. The educational and entertainment toys for children aged up to 12 were specially made by local women's self-help groups.

"These toys are from people of India to children of Afghanistan," she said. The MEA had placed orders for the toys.

Sreevidya said the Channapatna toys are ideal for children as chemical dye is not used in them and they come without sharp edges.

They are totally safe. Considering these factors, the toys were chosen and sent to Afghanistan, she added.

Sreevidya said Rs 4.98 crore has been released for the toys cluster at Channapatna. It is a joint venture by the State and Union governments.

"We are helping local artisans through online, offline and other platforms of marketing. The toys made here are of good quality and can be shipped to other countries," Sreevidya said.